

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

December 18, 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT

From: Robert S. Ingersoll *RSI*
Subject: National Observance of International
Women's Year

I. PROBLEM

There is a need, which is increasingly pressing, for the Administration to establish some mechanism to coordinate and direct the 1975 national observance of International Women's Year in this country.

II. BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

In 1972 the United Nations proclaimed 1975 as International Women's Year (IWY) and called upon all member states to conduct an appropriate program of national observance. An international conference under UN auspices is scheduled to meet in Mexico City next June.

In January of this year, President Nixon proclaimed 1975 as International Women's Year in the United States and called for full national observance of it, including both the private and public sectors.

Interest in IWY is widespread and intense among women's groups across the country. These groups are acutely aware of the extent to which the Federal Government committed itself, for example, to World Population Year in 1974 and are watching closely to

see whether the Administration makes a similar commitment to the observance of IWY. Indeed, there is beginning to be some criticism of the absence of any overt preparations in this regard.

I am establishing in the Department of State the position of Coordinator for International Women's Year with the primary responsibility of coordinating the U.S. participation in the Mexico City conference, but also to maintain liaison with the UN, other governments and domestic United States organizations. I anticipate that this person would have a small staff, to which the Department of State and USIA have already committed four positions.

I also believe that it would be desirable for you to establish a National Commission on the Observance of International Women's Year 1975 for the purposes outlined in the attached draft Executive Order. There is considerable interest among women's organizations in the establishment of such a Commission, particularly since it would be seen to parallel the organizational structure established in connection with World Population Year.

The Departments of State, HEW, Justice, Interior, Commerce and Transportation have committed \$330,000 of an estimated total budget of \$500,000 for such a Commission. Other agencies have been requested to contribute towards this tentative budget.

Recommendation:

I recommend that you sign the attached Executive Order establishing a National Commission on the Observance of International Women's Year 1975.